THE DAILY CLIPS

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East Carolina faces tough financial decisions
By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, April 17, 2010
Securing funding for the dental school, reducing cuts in operating revenue and changing a tuition increase are issues East Carolina University supporters should pursue when the General Assembly starts its 2010 session next month, Chancellor Steve Ballard told the university board of trustees Friday.
State leaders are discussing a possible 5-7 percent cut in base operating revenues for the University of North Carolina system. University officials are arguing for no more than a 2 percent cut. Erskine Bowles, outgoing UNC system president, has estimated 1,000 jobs would be lost if the 5 percent cut is approved, Ballard said.
Ballard told the board that ECU’s revenue losses will be in excess of $90 million in a three-year period if the 5 percent cut is approved.
“There is simply no way to avoid really tough decisions that will affect students and faculty,” he said.
ECU’s legislative goals mirror the UNC system goals, Ballard said, to keep budget cuts low, increase financial aid to students and accept an alternative tuition increase proposal.
Kevin Seitz, vice chancellor for administration and finance, said last year the General Assembly approved a $200 tuition increase for students who are resident undergraduates.
The plan is all money raised by the increase would stay at the university, but the state would take out an equal amount to return to the general fund, so no new revenue would be generated, he said.
The UNC system is proposing that universities be allowed to implement varying tuition increases — ECU’s would be $90 for an in-state undergraduate — with no reversion to the state.
ECU also will be asking for full operational funding for the dental school, Ballard said. The school needs more than $11 million to ensure it has adequate resources to operate. The Commission on Dental Accreditation is scheduled to start its review of ECU’s dental program in September.
“If we don’t get operating funds this year we won’t get accredited in September,” Ballard said.
Without accreditation, faculty can’t be hired, and students can’t be enrolled.
ECU’s dental school is scheduled to open in the fall 2011 semester with 50 students.
State officials say since the university won’t spend the entire $11 million in one fiscal year, they don’t want to give the entire amount. Ballard said the commission won’t accredit the school based on the promise of future funding.
ECU board Chairman David Brody urged trustees from other parts of North Carolina to stay in contact with their legislators.
State representatives and senators are likely to be more responsive to university officials when the person introducing them is a constituent, he said.
The trustees also unanimously approved the following actions:
To purchase six parcels of property at 1002 S. Evans St., working with the ECU Real Estate Foundation. The property contains a 3,264-square-foot masonry building that once housed a dry cleaning business. The purchase is contingent on a clean environmental report and state approval. To trade two parcels of property with the City of Greenville. The university plans to give the city two vacant parcels at 115 and 205 E. Ninth St. In return, the city would purchase property at 1001 E. Fourth St. and give it to the university. The city plans to use the Ninth Street property for its planned Intermodal Transportation Center.
Will lease rooftop space to ATC Outdoors SAS LLC to improve cell phone coverage on campus. Architectural drawings for a proposed boathouse for North Recreation Fields and a team building at the university’s athletics fields.
Naming proposals for various facilities on campus.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
SCIENCE BRIEFS

Lyrid meteors to light northeast sky

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Look to the northeast sky later this week for the Lyrid meteor shower.

The light show, caused by dust particles entering the upper atmosphere, occurs each year around April 22 as Earth encounters the trail of Comet Thatcher, report astronomers at the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute near Brevard.

The mornings of April 22 and 23 will be top times for observing this year's Lyrids. As with all meteor showers, the Lyrids are best observed between midnight and dawn from a clear, dark location with a good horizon.

Look to the northeast to find the meteors appearing to radiate out of the constellation of Lyra the harp. Binoculars or telescopes are not needed.

Monogamous frogs under study at ECU

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Amphibians aren't known for their fidelity, but one species of frogs identified by biologists at East Carolina University may be the first confirmed species that is monogamous.

Two ECU biologists discovered the faithful frog in Peru, adding insights into the ecological factors that influence mating behavior.

The scientists' work, published this month in The American Naturalist, may be the most solid evidence yet that a single ecological cause such as breeding grounds may influence mating habits. The mimic poison frog of Peru breeds in small pools, and the success of its offspring depends on both parents taking an active role.

By contrast, a related species, which breeds in large pools where food is widely available, had no need to involve both parents, so frogs of this family typified the polygamous lifestyle.

"We were able to tie the evolution of monogamy and the evolution of biparental care to variation in a single ecological factor," said Wayne Summer, an ECU biology professor whose specialties include evolutionary ecology and evolutionary genetics. Summers authored the study with Jason Brown, a former ECU graduate student who is now a researcher at Duke University, and Victor Morales of Ricardo Palma University in Lima, Peru.

Exoplanet orbits shake up theories

Los Angeles Times

Some highly unusual planets orbiting other stars are calling into question current theories on how solar systems are formed and suggesting that more complex theories must be developed.

European researchers reported last week that some recently observed extrasolar planets, or exoplanets, are revolving around their stars in the opposite direction from the star's spin. That finding is inconsistent with the view that planets are formed by the condensation of dust from a disk surrounding a newly formed star. Other planets were found to have highly tilted orbits that are also at odds with conventional theory.

The findings suggest that planets with such eccentric orbits would destroy smaller, rocky planets, eliminating the chances of Earth-like planets around those stars.

The results were reported at a Glasgow meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society by astronomer Andrew Cameron of the University of St. Andrews, Scotland.

The results imply that massive planets must reach their final orbits not through dust accumulation, "but rather through the much more dramatic and exciting process of gravitational billiards," astronomer Alan Boss of the Carnegie Institution of Washington said.
ECU College of Nursing students including Amber Sykes, left, and Candice Marshburn, and faculty and staff signed a banner during Diversity Day on Thursday to send to the FSIL School of Nursing in Haiti.
Cliff Hollis/ECU News Services

**Nursing college raises funds, awareness about Haiti**
Saturday, April 17, 2010

**ECU News Services**

East Carolina University’s College of Nursing united Thursday to raise funds and awareness about Haiti during its second annual Diversity Day.
The aroma of boulettes, red beans and rice mixed with mango juice, coconut banana confection and rhythmic music as hundreds participated in the celebration.
ECU nursing students, faculty, staff and alumni raised $5,690 through bake sales, dinners and other events the past several months to fund seven full scholarships for nursing students in Haiti.
The total surpassed the initial goal of $4,000 for five scholarships.
“This project on Haiti has brought us together in so many ways,” said Kim Thompson, student services assistant and co-chairwoman of the college’s diversity committee. Symbolically, Thompson, faculty member Dr. Elaine Scott and student Jessica Bland kicked off the event by holding hands high above their heads.
“Today, we are learning about what unites nurses around the world,” Scott said.
Bland, president of the Multicultural Student Nurse Association, said people underestimate the power of diversity.
“Diversity to me is inclusiveness in a variety of ways,” Dr. Sylvia Brown, dean of nursing, said.
“We’re coming together today with students, faculty and staff for a united effort.”

ECU nursing has collaborated with the FSIL School of Nursing in Haiti for more than a year.
While planning was already under way for this year’s Diversity Day when the disaster struck, the organizing committee decided to double efforts to help Haiti. The day, funded by a BB&T Leadership grant, started as a way to encourage nursing faculty, staff and students to explore cultural diversity, especially as it relates to health care.
Keynote speaker Jimmy Hite, a local architect and board member of the Haiti Nursing Foundation, designed the nursing school, which survived the Jan. 12 earthquake. The epicenter was near the city of Leogane, where the nursing school is located. Hite shared photographs and described the nursing school before and after the earthquake. Completed in 2005, the first 13 baccalaureate students graduated in 2009. Hite spoke with the nursing school dean, Hilda Alcindor, who was teaching at the time of the earthquake. She felt a shift several feet in one direction, knocking her off her feet, and then back several feet the other way before everyone made their way out safely. The nursing school escaped major damage, and college text books sent from ECU last fall were knocked off the shelf, but have been put back up, Hite said.

Residents seeking help began arriving at the nursing school just 20 minutes after the earthquake struck. Alcindor stood outside and did triage, telling the faculty and students what to do. “After three days, she told them to go home,” Hite said. The students had no idea if their families were okay since communication had been severed. More than 5,000 people were treated at the nursing school with little medicine available before reinforcements arrived five days later.

“Earthquakes don’t kill people. Bad buildings kill people,” Hite said. Unfortunately, many buildings in Third World countries lack the physical structure to survive a catastrophic magnitude 7.0 quake.

Hite recalled that when they completed the nursing school in Haiti, there was no faculty or curriculum. “The miracle was really not the building, but to have the people to make the building real,” Hite said. “You are the school.”

Several ECU faculty members are providing their course materials for nursing students in Haiti. For more information on the school, visit http://haitinursing.org.

**Biodiversity center to mark Earth Day**

On Earth Day, ECU’s Department of Biology and the new North Carolina Center for Biodiversity will host wildlife journalist Will Stolzenburg as the featured speaker for their inaugural Earth Day celebration.

Stolzenburg will discuss his first book, “Where the Wild Things Were: Life, Death, and Ecological Wreckage in a Land of Vanishing Predators,” at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Science and Technology Building, Room C207. The presentation is free and open to the public. A book signing will follow the lecture.

Stolzenburg, recently selected as the 2010 Alicia Patterson Journalism Fellow, has spent the past 20 years covering the subject of conservation biology. He is the former science editor of Nature Conservancy magazine, a position he held for 15 years. In this role, Stolzenburg described the Earth’s sixth mass extinction while reporting stories of its survivors.

According to his Web site, Stolzenburg has profiled park guards fighting swarms of timber poachers in one of Amazonia’s wildest tracts of tropical forest. He has described evolutionary marvels from atop a Venezuelan peak never before visited by humans, while watching the forests below slashed and burned. And on the brink of a cliff in the middle of the Bering Sea, he has witnessed one of the world’s mightiest gatherings of seabirds above beaches where one of the largest gatherings of seals is mysteriously vanishing.

His book, “Where The Wild Things Were,” follows a group of scientists who discover the critical role of Earth’s great predators in sustaining the diversity of life. Stolzenburg explores these animals’ great power, and uncovers a world of paradox — of menace and chaos developing where nature’s fiercest and scariest creatures no longer rule.

Stolzenburg received his master’s degree in wildlife from New Mexico State University, where he explored the science of predator control. To read more about Stolzenburg and his book, visit the Web site www.thewildthings.net.

The event is co-sponsored by The North Carolina Center for Biodiversity, The Institute for Coastal Science and Policy and the Center for Sustainable Tourism.
The new North Carolina Center for Biodiversity furthers the cause of conservation of biodiversity and is a collaboration of biologists at ECU who seek to study biodiversity at all levels, educating others about the consequences of the loss of species by promoting research, outreach to schools and the community and by offering workshops and lectures designed for all audiences. For additional information, contact Jason Bond, director of the North Carolina Center for Biodiversity, at (252) 328-2910 or bondja@ecu.edu.

New chairman of engineering named
O. Hayden Griffin Jr. has been named the new chairman of the Department of Engineering in the College of Technology and Computer Science at ECU.
Griffin comes to ECU from Virginia Tech, where he joined the faculty in 1985 as an associate professor in the College of Engineering and where he was most recently professor and head of the Department of Engineering Education.
Griffin began his career at the U.S. Naval Weapons Laboratory (now the Naval Surface Warfare Center) in Dahlgren, Va. He subsequently held positions at BF Goodrich in Akron, Ohio, Bendix Advanced Technology Center in Columbia, Md., and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Md.
“I’ve been aware of the developing engineering department at ECU for several years, and I’m very fortunate and excited to have the opportunity to participate in the next stages of its development.” Griffin said. “In addition to providing excellent educational and career opportunities for young women and men, the ECU engineering program has become an engine of economic and workforce development for eastern North Carolina. Engineering is an exciting, creative profession that strives to make the Earth a better place for all people, and the graduates of this program are well-prepared for that task.”
Dean David White of the College of Technology and Computer Sciences said, “I’m delighted that Dr. Griffin has decided to join the college.
“He has a distinguished record in the field of engineering. His leadership will no doubt be a tremendous asset to our engineering program and to the college.”
Griffin holds bachelor and master degrees in mechanical engineering from Texas Tech University and a doctorate in engineering mechanics from Virginia Tech.

Fair to focus on volunteering
A community service fair for ECU faculty and staff will feature representatives from more than 20 nonprofit agencies. The public also is welcome to attend the event.
According to organizers, the event will serve to increase awareness for opportunities for volunteering with local nonprofit organizations. The fair will be 1-4 p.m. on April 28 at the Willis Building, 300 E. First St., and the American Red Cross will hold a bloodmobile from noon-5 p.m. For ECU employees, a human resources representative will be available to answer questions about using community service leave for volunteering.
Agencies planning to attend the event include the Alzheimer’s Association — Eastern North Carolina Chapter, American Cancer Society, Greenville Community Shelters, Greenville Jaycees, Humane Society of the United States, Literacy Volunteers of America — Pitt County, North Carolina Big Sweep, REAL Crisis Intervention, Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina, Tar River Land Conservancy, and United Way of Pitt County.
Refreshments will be served, and the American Red Cross will give reusable shopping bags to all blood donors.
For more information, contact Margaret Umphrey at 328-9187.

Upcoming Events:
Tuesday: Singer-songwriter Suzanne Vega in concert, 7:30 p.m., Wright Auditorium. Part of the S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series. Tickets available at 328-4788 or (800) ECU-ARTS.

Friday: The Billy Taylor Jazz Festival gala concert featuring the ECU Jazz Ensemble “A” and special guest Cyrus Chestnut, 8 p.m., Murphy Center. Tickets available at (800) ECU-ARTS. See www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
'Jackets and Jewels' coming to McGinnis

The Daily Reflector  
Monday, April 19, 2010

"Jackets and Jewels," a scholarship fundraiser hosted by the Friends of the East Carolina University School of Theatre and dance, will be held April 24 at McGinnis Theater. The family-friend event will feature students in a variety show including Broadway tunes, children’s theater, jazz, ballet and tap.
Wine and cheese will be served at 6:30 p.m. in the Studio Theater, followed by the performance at 8 p.m. in McGinnis Theatre.
"It’s a little theater, a little dance and a great cause," said Friends committee chairwoman SuSu Corbitt.
Additional Friends committee members responsible for planning the event include Shelby Douglass, Bonny Feldbush, Rose Gilbert, Jane Brown, Jane Lawrence and Susan Martin Meggs. Michael Glenn of Jefferson's is assisting with decorations.
Tickets are $25 per person. Proceeds will be used for merit scholarships given by the Friends group.
For tickets, call 328-6869 or visit the Web site www.ecuarts.com.
Linda and Peter Boettger and Victoria Price, foreground, emptied their rowboat of bags filled with plastic bottles and aluminum cans and a few old tires taken from the Tar River and its banks Saturday during the second annual Riverkeeper Cup Cleanup Challenge.
Michael Abramowitz/The Daily Reflector

Volunteers loaded a waste disposal bin with debris collected on the Tar River Saturday during the second annual Riverkeeper Cup Cleanup Challenge, sponsored by the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation and Keep America Beautiful.
Michael Abramowitz/The Daily Reflector

**Volunteers work together to spruce up Tar**

By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, April 18, 2010

The competition deepened Saturday for this year’s challenge to see which eastern North Carolina community’s pride shone most brightly across the surface of the Tar-Pamlico River system. Greenville tried to repeat as gold medal winner and retain the cup at the second annual Riverkeeper Cup Cleanup Challenge, conducted by the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation. This year’s river cleanup competition added two more teams to the field that included Greenville and Washington, N.C., from last year’s inaugural event. Tarboro and Rocky Mount placed volunteers from the PTRF and Keep America Beautiful organizations of Nash and Edgecombe counties on the water for the friendly — but important — competition, PTRF member David Emmerling said. “Our organization and riverkeeper Heather Jacobs Deck challenged the municipalities up and down the river to see how much they could get out of the river, by weight,” Emmerling said. The Greenville team numbered close to 60 participants who launched themselves in kayaks, canoes and small watercraft from the Town Common at 8 a.m. They filled their crafts with tires, cans and assorted flotsam and jetsam from the river’s surface and banks, then came ashore and unloaded it at the Port Terminal boat launch about 11 a.m. Tires, Styrofoam cups and containers, plastic jugs and bottles, and aluminum cans were the most common objects being disposed into portable waste removal bins.

“I think we’re slowly gaining an appreciation for what an incredible resource the Pamlico-Tar River watershed is,” Emmerling said. “We have some incredibly beautiful and unique water in this stretch from Tarboro to Little Washington.”

Trash disposed in the water poses a threat to people and wildlife, especially from chemicals that leach into the water from much of the waste, he said. Mayor Pat Dunn donned a water jacket and helped pull trash from the river. “It’s a gorgeous river and a real asset to the city,” Dunn said. “It’s a place for recreation, where parents can bring their children, where a small investment in a canoe or boat can bring years of family enjoyment. The people who were out cleaning it up today clearly recognize its value.”
The mayor said she was disturbed to see some of the trash that was in the river. “Things don’t disappear just because you throw them in the river. I challenge people to care for the things you have and use, including the river,” Dunn said.

Many of the volunteers at the event were East Carolina University, Pitt Community College and area high school students, which pleased Cindy Wooten, a teacher at both higher education places, and Bill Hunneke, an employee of the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the president of the PTRF.

“Our biggest goal is to make people aware of the tremendous resource the people of the watershed have in their backyard,” Hunneke said. “It’s a joy to see the kids having a great time, and picking up garbage to boot.”

Wooten looked around at the young people and described them as a major part of the solution. “This makes an impact on them; they learn and understand that we’ve got a great world, but we have to do something to keep it that way,” Wooten said.

ECU students Nick Herndon, Jake Koeller and Anthony Annunziata were in shorts and shirts, depositing trash into the dumpster. They were pleased with the day’s haul. “It was a good time, and I felt good about the benefit to me and the community. It’s one of the real attractions of this town,” Koeller said.

Herndon said it is important to spread the word among the college community to keep the river clean. “I saw that some parts of the river are in pretty bad condition, but it’s a nice river,” he said.

Final tallies of collected trash to determine the 2010 Riverkeeper Cup winning community were not available.

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@reflector.com or (252) 329-9571.
George A. Weimer

George A. Weimer Dr. George Alexander Weimer, 81, died after a brief illness on Thursday, April 15, 2010. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Wilma Anne Rose Weimer of Richmond, Va.; son, G. Alexander Weimer Jr. of Wachapreague, Va.; two daughters, Margaret Weimer Parrish of Richmond, Va., and Martha Weimer O'Brien of Midlothian, Va.; seven grandchildren; a sister, Margaret Weimer Sentell of Cleveland, Ohio; and a sister-in-law, Elizabeth Murphy Weimer, of Buckhannon, W.Va. Dr. Weimer was born in Wheeling, W.Va., and received his B.S. from Bethany College. He attended West Virginia University and received his MD from the Medical College of Virginia in 1952. After serving in the U.S. Air Force for two years, Dr. Weimer and his family moved to Gretna, Va. where he practiced family medicine until 1964. He completed his residency in anesthesiology at Ohio Valley General Hospital, then moved to Greenville, N.C., where he practiced at Pitt County Memorial Hospital and served on the faculty of the East Carolina School of Medicine. He and his wife Anne returned to Richmond in 1975 when he joined the McGuire Clinic and practiced medicine at St. Luke's Hospital which later became Health South. After his retirement from the Clinic in 1988, he practiced as a locum tenens for about ten years. An avid gardener, he also enjoyed woodworking, history, and old houses. Above all, he was a devoted husband and loving father and grandfather. A memorial service is planned for Sunday at 2 p.m. at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Powhatan, Va. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Emmanuel Episcopal Church, P. O. Box 481, Powhatan, Virginia 23139 or the Linen-Powell Patient Resource Library, Massey Cancer Center, P.O. Box 980037, Richmond, VA 23298.
Sense of urgency propels quest for solar fuel
UNC-Chapel Hill researcher gets funding for his efforts to chemically convert sunlight into liquid fuel

BY MEGAN SCUDELLARI
CORRESPONDENT

CHAPEL HILL - Thomas Meyer wants to convert sunlight into a liquid fuel.

The soft-spoken researcher at UNC-Chapel Hill - one of the most highly cited chemists in the world - has been working on that quest for more than 35 years.

Now he's getting a boost.

Last August, the Department of Energy awarded UNC-CH $17.5 million over five years to run an Energy Frontier Research Center, one of 46 new centers around the nation dedicated to energy research. Meyer will direct it.

And recently UNC-CH, Duke, N.C. State and RTI International submitted a joint proposal to the Department of Energy to host a "Fuels from Sunlight" energy innovation hub in Research Triangle Park, a $135 million collaborative center to support national solar fuels research. The consortium hopes to hear back later this year.

Scientists have long been tantalized by the possibility of harnessing the vast amount of energy in sunlight. The sun provides more energy to Earth's surface in an hour than humankind consumes in a year, researchers say. But current photovoltaic technologies, such as solar cells, only conduct that energy during the day. We have no good way to store solar energy.

But plants do.

Through photosynthesis, plants use sunlight to convert water and carbon dioxide to sugars, a storable fuel. Learning to mimic photosynthesis is the greatest chemical challenge of this century, says Harry Gray, a solar fuels researcher at the California Institute of Technology.

"Everything else pales in comparison," he says.

But despite decades of research, there are still no commercially available, cheap and efficient solar fuel technologies. Meyers has dedicated his career to changing that.

Since the 1970s, when an oil crisis prompted the government to invest in the research, Meyer has been working to design a technology capable of using sunlight to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, which can be recombined later to produce electricity. Another method would convert carbon dioxide and water into methane and oxygen. But for the last 25 years, funding for the field has been unreliable. "We had all the pieces lying there," says Meyer, "but nobody cared."

Until now.

"We've made a lot of progress quickly," says Meyer, gazing out a window at his office on the UNC-CH campus. He turns and smiles. "Check back in six months."

Megan Scudellari: megan@scudellari.com

Shaun Hampton and Brittany Westlake align a laser at UNC-Chapel Hill to study how energy and charge move through molecular materials.
Change in air at ECU

GREENVILLE -- Time and time again, the quarterbacks line up side by side, drop back in tandem and launch the football in the air. Lincoln Riley stands a few feet away, scrutinizing every let-’er-rip moment for more progress.

Change has arrived at East Carolina, all right.

Riley is the offensive coordinator charged with installing the pass-happy spread offense that wore out so many scoreboards at Texas Tech. And as the Pirates finish spring practice this week, his new pupils are not only picking things up quickly - they're learning that the offense is a lot simpler than all those receiver-heavy sets and balls flying everywhere would suggest.

"The hardest thing is changing something they've done for so long, and especially something they've had success with," Riley said. "They've won a bunch of games and conference championships, so they've got some belief obviously in what they did before.

"On one hand it might've been easier to go to a losing team that didn't have confidence in what they were doing before. You might have been able to change their mindset easier. But shoot, if you had to pick, I'd rather have guys that know how to win and expect to win. That's the thing we have in our hip pocket right now."

No one better personifies the change better than Riley, a 26-year-old who looks young enough to be a student manager or even a player. He began his rapid coaching ascent under Mike Leach at Texas Tech by giving up on a playing career as a walk-on quarterback to become a volunteer assistant as a sophomore.

He spent the last three seasons as a receivers coach before assuming play-calling duties for the Red Raiders' bowl game last year when Leach was suspended and ultimately fired. He then followed fellow assistant Ruffin McNeill to Greenville when the East Carolina alumnus replaced Skip Holtz as head coach.

Three months later, there's a buzz about how the offense will look when fans get their first peek during today's scrimmage.

"I think a lot of our fans have seen and read on what we did at Texas Tech, and it's always that way with this offense," McNeill said. "We get a lot of questions on our offense."

Under Holtz and former offensive coordinator Todd Fitch, the Pirates had more rushes than passes in eight of 14 games last year, rushed at least 30 times in 12 games and threw 40 passes - its high was 41 - three times.

By comparison, Leach's Red Raiders passed more than ran in all 13 games, rushed at least 30 times in just four games and threw more than 40 passes in every game but one.
Now, with six former Leach assistants in Greenville, East Carolina looks more like Lubbock East. And that's just fine for the Pirates who have marveled at Texas Tech's offense from afar.

Take big-play receiver Dwayne Harris, who had seven touchdown catches to go with five rushing scores and three returns scores last season. Ask Riley about what the offense can do for someone like Harris, and he simply points to a picture of NFL first-round draft pick Michael Crabtree on his office wall.

"It's a receiver's dream," Harris said. "The first time I heard they were coming, all I thought about was Crabtree's freshman year when he put up tremendous numbers (134 catches, 1,962 yards, 22 touchdowns). I just thought to myself, I can have a year like that with this offense."

While Harris is clearly the Pirates' top weapon, the quarterback position is a little murkier. Sophomore walk-on Brad Wornick has performed well enough to compete with recruited sophomore Josh Jordan and redshirt freshman Rio Johnson for the starter's spot heading into training camp.

In addition, Dominique Davis - the former Boston College quarterback who spent a season in junior college in Kansas - is expected to enroll this summer and compete for the job.
Pirates still have some kinks to work out

GREENVILLE -- Like the stands in the east end zone of Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium, East Carolina's football team is a work in progress.

That much was clear to the 7,125 fans on hand Saturday with a walk-on at starting quarterback, several dropped passes and a rash of penalties during the Pirates' first spring game under new coach Ruffin McNeill.

Between now and Sept. 5, the opener against Tulsa, the 7,000-seat addition in the end zone isn't the only thing that needs to be finished.

After winning back-to-back Conference USA titles under Skip Holtz, ECU has a new scheme on offense, a new scheme on defense and 15 starting positions to fill.

McNeill called the top job at his alma mater a "challenge," after 28 seniors left the program with Holtz, who went to South Florida in early January.

"We lost 28 really good football players," McNeill said. "I'm excited about the guys that have stepped up and taken advantage of the opportunity."

McNeill praised the crowd and the players' effort on both sides while saying the mistakes would be corrected.

Offensive coordinator Lincoln Riley made a more direct assessment of the 100-play scrimmage, which was set up as offense-vs.-defense rather than a true spring game.

"We tried to make too much happen," Riley said.

The 26-year-old coordinator called the effort disappointing and said at times the trio of untested quarterbacks made "stupid passes."

"We definitely have improvements to make," Riley said.

In the switch to Riley's spread offense, an import from Texas Tech, sophomore walk-on Brad Wornick has emerged as the top candidate to replace Patrick Pinkney at quarterback.

Wornick completed 18 of 33 passes for 226 yards with two touchdowns and an interception on Saturday. Wornick's ascension up the depth chart -- he didn't take a snap in 2009 -- is a surprise to everyone but him.

"Coming in here, [the starters] is what you hope to be," Wornick said. "Right now, I'm in a pretty good position so I'm feeling good about it."

Wornick, who is 6 feet 2 and 185 pounds, had his moments on Saturday, including a 48-yard touchdown
pass to senior receiver Javon Brumsey, but he also looked disjointed, as did the offense as a whole.

With three starters back on the offensive line and receiver Dwayne Harris, who led the team with 83 catches in 2009, there are parts for Riley to make a productive offense by the fall.

Slot receiver Michael Bowman (six catches, 43 yards) and Andrew Bodenheimer (six catches, 83 yards, two TDs) showed potential in ECU's new pass-happy offense.

Over the course of 100 plays, the Pirates ran 29 times and passed 71. Scholarship quarterbacks Rio Johnson (18-for-27, 105 yards) and Josh Jordan (4-for-11, 23) also took turns directing the spread but weren't as effective or consistent as Wornick.

The defense, which needs nine new starters, didn't pull any punches. The Pirates blitzed early and often to ring up 11 sacks. They also played man coverage in the secondary, a departure from the previous regime.

"Last year, we'd sit back and play a zone," said corner Travis Simmons, one of two returning starters. "This year, we're coming after the quarterback a lot more and being more aggressive."

Simmons, who had one of two interceptions on the day, said ECU fans shouldn't be worried about Saturday's mistakes or the new players on both sides of the ball.

"There are a lot of new faces out there but there's a lot of talent," Simmons said. "We're not worried about it at all. These guys will get better."

jp.giglio@newsobserver.com or 919-829-8938
A report by federal law enforcement officers, released last week on the third anniversary of the Virginia Tech massacre, offers the first comprehensive analysis of violent attacks carried out on U.S. college campuses in the past century and finds that more than half have occurred in the past 20 years.

Researchers looked at public records of 272 incidents of "targeted violence" at colleges since 1900. The study, "Campus Attacks," was a joint effort of the Secret Service, the FBI and the U.S. Department of Education.

The report offers a foundation of research for the discipline of threat assessment, a growing facet of college administration that seeks to predict and prevent Virginia Tech-style attacks. On April 16, 2007, Tech student Seung Hui Cho, 23, killed 32 people and himself in one of the nation's deadliest attacks.

"This is the first time that anybody has identified in any kind of comprehensive way the uptick in these violent acts over the course of decades," said Barry Spodak, an expert on threat assessment.

The analysis found that three-fifths of campus attacks in a 108-year span occurred in the past two decades: 79 in the 1990s, and 83 in the 2000s through 2008.

The report attributes the surge to the growing campus populations and expanding media coverage; the past two decades have also seen increased federal requirements for colleges to report crimes. The report focuses on attacks that were premeditated and used potentially lethal force.

College killings are not an entirely new phenomenon. Researchers found episodes from 1909, when a man fatally shot his former girlfriend at her college and then shot himself.

Attacks most often happen in April and October. Attackers are overwhelmingly male, and they have ranged in age from 16 to 62. The eldest was a part-time librarian who shot a fellow librarian in 2008 after a dispute over work ethics. Relatively few perpetrators, 75 of 260, were students of traditional college age.

One-third of attacks were related to intimate relationships. "Retaliation" was the second leading cause, followed by romantic rejection and obsession.

The report doesn't offer tips for colleges seeking to profile potential killers. Colleges awaiting such help "are going to be left wanting," Spodak said, although federal authorities might publish such guidance in the future. The analysis does identify patterns in past attacks that could steer colleges in assessing threats.
Threat assessment teams shouldn't limit themselves to campuses, the report says, because 20 percent of the violent incidents studied took place off campus. Communication with outside law enforcement authorities "is essential," it says.

One-quarter of attacks involved weapons other than guns and knives, so investigators must "look beyond" those traditional weapons, the report says.

Students represented 45 percent of perpetrators. Many attackers were former students, current or former employees, or people indirectly affiliated with the college, if at all.
If You're a Tall Vegan Named Zolp, Your Tuition Worries Are Over

Students Scramble for Zany Scholarships; Duct Tape Prom Dress Scores $3,000 Prize

By JILLIAN MINCER

For two Colorado students, duct tape helped seal dreams of a college education.

As part of a scholarship competition, Izzy Bristow and John Dyer used nearly 40 rolls of the tacky stuff to create off-the-wall fashions: prom suits and gowns in royal blue. The shiny adhesive outfits—hers with a detachable peacock-patterned collar—took 90 hours to construct and netted them $3,000 each as winners of the "Stuck at Prom Scholarship Contest" sponsored by marketers of the Duck brand tape.

"I was shocked," says Ms. Bristow, who is now a freshman studying costume design at Western Oregon University. "But it was pretty cool to know that I could do something other than write an essay to get a scholarship."

While a few thousand bucks may barely put a dent in annual college tuition costs these days, plenty of strapped students are chasing down obscure micro-grants—scholarships with requirements that are nonacademic, and sometimes downright bizarre.

Intrepid types can find awards for vegetarians, nudists or so-so students with creative abilities. Some grants require a special knack for sewing or playing the bagpipes; others can only be secured by fate, such as having a particular last name or a towering physique.

The Tall Clubs International gives grants of $1,000 to men who stand at least 6'2" or women 5'10" and over.

Applicants need to have good grades, write an essay about "What Being Tall Means" and offer proof of their height. To satisfy the main requirement, most applicants submit to a measuring session at one of the club's local chapters.

The food industry serves up a smorgasbord of offerings. The National Potato Council provides a $5,000 award to a graduate student pursuing curricula in agribusiness "which enhance the potato industry," according to contest rules.

The Scholar Athlete Milk Mustache of the Year (SAMMY) hands 25 students scholarships in the amount of $7,500 each, plus a trip to Disney World and the chance to star in a "Got Milk?" mustache ad.

Thousands of American individuals, associations, foundations and corporations pony up more than $3 billion in private scholarships each year, according to Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of FastWeb.com, a Web guide to scholarships.
These include prestigious awards such as National Merit scholarships and other traditional prizes.

More offbeat aid tracked by Mr. Kantrowitz starts out at about $250 and can reach tens of thousands of dollars.

"These scholarships won't determine whether someone attends a school, but it alleviates some of the financial strain," says Tony Pals, a spokesman for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

"Thinking that you're going to win a free ride is unrealistic," adds Mr. Kantrowitz. "But students who excel at something usually have success."

Claire Askew, 19, of Lenexa, Kan., had fallen in love with Lewis & Clark during a family trip to Portland, Oregon. But even with generous financial aid from the school, she figured "there was no way" she could afford the annual tuition and fees of about $45,000.

Each night she probed the Internet for college cash. After sending off several applications and essays, she scored $4,000 from the Potawatomi Indian tribe, of which she is a member. She also managed to impress the Vegetarian Resource Group, a nonprofit educational organization that awarded her $5,000 for a book she had written in high school about being a teenage vegan.

Having a green palate wasn't enough, stresses Jeannie McStay, outreach coordinator for the group, which provides two scholarships a year. The funds, she says, come from an anonymous donor who wants to reward applicants who have promoted vegetarianism at school or in their community.

Unusual skills and talents can put matriculants over the top. Andrew Bova, 21, of Perrysburg, Ohio, began playing bagpipes when he was 12. With only a few U.S. schools offering a degree program in bagpipe performance, he was keen to attend Carnegie Mellon University. He caught his breath after landing a place in the music program, as well as the school’s Lewis W. Davidson Bagpipe Memorial Scholarship, worth $7,000 a year.

The money will reduce his debt load, says Mr. Bova, who is mindful of his future income prospects. "I'll be happy as a bagpiper but God knows I'll never be driving a Porsche," he says.

At some schools, there's plenty in a name. Loyola University Chicago offers tuition scholarships to Catholic students with the last name of Zolp. No cheating—the school requires a birth certificate and a baptismal or confirmation certificate. The scholarship was a bequest from Fr. William Zolp, who took classes at the campus but didn't pursue a degree. For the 2009 academic year, the school doled out $25,000 to two Zolps.

"I had heard about all sorts of wacky scholarships, but this topped the list," says Lindsey Zolp, 21, a senior who is a Zolp fund beneficiary. As a kid, she recalls how her last name automatically put her at the back of most lines. "I hated being a 'Z,'" she says. "But I guess it paid off."

North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C., has had a disproportionate number of students named Gatlin or Gatling. That's because John Gatling, a successful businessman, bequeathed to his alma mater funds for such scholarships, which ramped up in 1979. Those born with either spelling are eligible for the grants, which typically average about $14,000 a year.

Conas Gatlin, who has two college-age sons, learned about the program while chatting with a relative at a family reunion. "I thought, 'Surely he isn't serious?'" recalls Ms. Gatlin.

After checking online and with the college, she discovered it was indeed for real. Her sons, Jonathan and Joshua, applied to the school and were granted both admission and Gatlin gifts. As a result, the Houston-area family was able to avoid taking out loans.

When Ms. Gatlin tells others about her family's good fortune, she says some people ask, "Can you adopt my child?"

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